

Appendix D

Grinnell Community Survey Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Q11: What do you like **MOST or **LEAST** about the park and recreation **SYSTEM** provided by the City of Grinnell?**

Like **Most**

- Lakes
- Wildlife
- Lots of parks -- convenient
- Music on Thursdays
- Upkeep is quite good
- Central Park
- Arbor Lake Park
- Merrill Park
- Farmers' Market
- Shelters for picnics, etc.
- The number of parks
- High quality of park maintenance
- Accessibility
- That they are properly mowed and maintained
- Wonderful, safe equipment
- Cleanliness
- Locations so most people are near a park
- Variety
- Picnicking
- Music in the Park
- Farmers' Market
- Several parks in many locations, each with different things to do
- Uses of Central Park
- Lots of variety of parks scattered throughout
- Thursdays in the Park
- Climbing structures for kids
- Farmers Market and Music in the Park
- Number of parks
- Music in the Park
- Music in the Park, Farmers Market
- Lots of fun family activities, lots of things in Central Park to bring the whole town together
- Playgrounds, pool
- Variety – well spaced through town.
- Good equipment at Merrill and Bailey
- Fishing, walking trails, open spaces for kids to play baseball/football/soccer
- Thursdays in the Park!
- Trees
- Convenient locations
- Music in the Park; Farmers Market; great playground equipment (and not the same pieces in each one either)

- Being able to fish, walking around Arbor Lake and the bike trail – good exercise
- Clean; well-kept landscaping; kids' playsets
- Many parks throughout the community.
- Activities for kids.
- Available and spread out in the community.
- Very clean and well maintained.
- Number of parks.
- Accessible locations.
- Variety.
- Pretty clean.
- Clean.
- Good for kids.
- Gives me something to do.
- Good place to have fun.
- Spots to skate.
- Stuff to do.
- Do not know.
- Slides and sand.
- Monkey bars and jungle gym.
- Benches.
- Fishing.
- Location of parks -- Central, Arbor Lake, Merrill, Lions
- New swings/ water features pool
- New equipment in many parks for the kids
- Great walking trail at Arbor
- Walking trail at Arbor Lake Park
- It seems like we have a good amount of park space
- Arbor Lake Park has so much potential! Lots of opportunities to build on a solid foundation
- Arbor Lake natural areas
- Bike trails, walking/jogging bike paths, play equipment at Ahrens
- Large green spaces
- Children's play areas
- The variety
- There are many parks and all are well-maintained
- Existing grounds and equipment very nice
- Number of parks
- Arbor Lake natural areas
- Activities in Central Park
- The number of parks that are spread around the city
- That we have several parks
- Quality of playground equipment
- Trees, open space, residential setting
- Open space to fly kites or play games

Like Least

- Few bike trails
- Not all parks have water fountains/bathrooms
- Doggy waste stations would be convenient
- Restrooms
- Condition of pool
- Damage to trees by nature
- Van Horn and Jaycees are too isolated
- The poor quality of maintaining the trees, planting, and facilities.
- More professional direction and staff are needed.
- Too few plantings

- No beauty of plantings
- Lack of plantings to encourage birds and butterflies
- Poor quality of play equipment in Van Horn Park
- Maintenance
- Lack of water fountains in parks
- The Merrill Park ball diamond doesn't get used enough
- Why do parks have to close at 11:00 each night !! ??
- Some are not kept up very well, and low public awareness of parks and what it means to have good park system
- The presence of Memorial Building in Central Park
- the lakes need to be cleaned/improved (as is currently being done). Get rid of the aerators to limit geese. Would be nice to bring back sanded [?] swimming area at Ahrens.
- More trees and seating at some of our facilities, especially at pool
- Pool
- I just moved here – I don't know anything not to like.
- Happy Days – let's think of something new
- Some of the parks are in disrepair and are hard to find
- Pool infrastructure/shade
- Would like to see Van Horn upgraded
- Water quality at Arbor Lake; allowing pets to run loose; restrooms need work
- Old playground equipment; hard to know how to rent park space
- Restroom facilities aren't great
- Landscaping could be improved
- Allowing people to let their dogs run loose
- Lack of tables/grills and activities
- More garbage cans, need recycling options.
- Lack of connectivity between parks and variety of activities.
- Hard to find out about events being sponsored.
- Plastic playground equipment.
- Size of parks is small.
- Some of the parks could use walking trails or paths.
- Roads need to be improved for skating.
- Too small.
- Nothing.
- Sand and quality of equipment.
- Monkey bars, it hurts when you fall.
- No skate park.
- All have somewhat the same equipment.
- No room to skate.
- Nothing for teens.
- We need a new pool.
- We should spend the money on the new pool and not more parks.
- People do not clean up after themselves.
- Close the small, not-used parks
- Restrooms and shelters in many parks need serious attention
- Lack of good playground equipment at Van Horne Park
- Things that don't work
- Lack of focus and variety
- Lack of emphasis on native plantings
- Lack of art
- Destination parks should distribute usage better
- Jaycees Park underutilized
- Grungy, scary restrooms
- Pool often closed
- Few natural areas

- Lack of maintenance/development of current system
- State of disrepair of some facilities, i.e. weeds in play areas, covered wooden picnic benches falling apart
- No coordination between parks and recreation
- No skatepark. Once kids get to a certain age, playground equipment is of no interest. I feel that a very large portion of our youth are either doing without, going elsewhere, or causing damage to structures because of this.
- Not much to choose from -- slides or swings
- Not much there to attract the older kids and younger adults without kids
- Rundown facilities, especially Jaycees Park, Arbor Lake restrooms
- Lack of walking paths, especially Nyanza Lake/Miller Park
- Need more upkeep
- Lack of lighting
- More maintenance: pay attention to 'little' things (signs, paint, plumbing, trash, benches, grass, etc.)
- Need some focus -- themes

Q12.38. Any Others? Please Specify:

- Dog waste stations
- Maybe a fenced dog park where dogs could run loose
- Prairie plantings
- Community beautification
- Races
- Lack of seasonal activities
- Upkeep needs improvement
- Lack of communication
- The locker rooms at the pool
- Big natural areas with trails through so can be up close to nature (no cement trails)
- Maintain & expand shade tree parking areas
- Would be good to have bathrooms with sinks & hydrants or drinking fountains at all parks
- Biking
- Dog park – fenced area where dogs can run free under supervision
- Ice skating
- Skating – winter sports or outdoor recreation
-
- Connecting trails and frisbee golf.
- Children's Garden
- Signage: consistent throughout system, lighted, placed at main entry points
- Paint ball
- Archery course
- Basketball (2).

Comments

- I would appreciate dog waste stations. I bring my own bags and will carry waste out if I need to, but having bags and trash cans readily available would make it easier for everyone to pick up after their dogs.
- Swimming at City Pool
- Baseball at Ahrens
- Soccer at Ahrens
- Softball at Ahrens
- Don't need more parks – might even consider developing housing at Jaycees and Van Horn.
- Get rid of Thomazin
- Keep natural areas at Arbor Lake – birding, environmental education, etc.
- Use Ahrens for soccer, tennis, etc.

- We need a variety of types of parks (open space, community space, natural space, playgrounds, teen activities).
- As the town expands we need to set aside green space for those parts of town.
- The main function of parks and staff seems to be mowing and emptying garbage cans. I would like to see a professional parks director who would also emphasize plantings, tree maintenance, and facilities upkeep.
- I do not believe that the parks should be crammed with playground equipment, especially the gaudy plastic type. Leave some open, green space.
- I congratulate you on the organization of the meeting.
- Publicize the results of the survey with printed material.
- If you find beauty in the park, have pictures in Herald Register.
- Set up a memorial fund to fund special projects, or projects to honor a particular citizen who deserves recognition.
- Find a corporate sponsor for selected projects.
- In any decisions made the maintenance of the parks needs to be better – surfacing raked, maintained on a weekly basis.
- Take out the old, unsafe play equipment.
- Put surfacing around picnic tables – children tend to fall backward off picnic table benches.
- Grinnell parks system was a deciding factor in our choice of Grinnell. New, safe equipment, cultural activities, and quality were the bonuses.
- We would like to see facilities for the “other seasons” than late spring/summer. For example, indoor play areas for winter/extreme heat, and wading fountain for the very hot days of summer.
- Expansion in city limits of bike trails.
- Need for senior citizens’ recreation such as shuffleboard and game area.
- Too much reliance on facilities at Ahrens Park (private facility) and college-owned areas.
- The city should look at a public golf course, driving range, and miniature golf course.
- Keep kites over Grinnell, airport attractions, antique cars show
- Reinstate balloon rally
- Make more of the historical museum on Broad Street
- Update city swimming pool
- Maybe donations could be accepted if need more \$\$\$. This way, people could offer more who can afford to.
- Maybe the enforcement system is over-funded?
- Environmental education – nature is the best teacher
- Allow camping, especially tents
- Add shelters & grills to picnic areas
- A shade and a modest slide for swimming pool
- Allow small rowing of paddle types
- Open parking with shade trees at lake access
- Keep trails in park natural
- Nesting trees for owls
- Encourage art in the parks, open to all
- Walking [in parks] is good exercise
- Keep school programs fun and simple
- Art fairs open to all
- Keep baseball fun
- Bob Dylan/Neil Young concerts – sell tickets
- Keep family recreation programs simple
- Frisbee golf a good way to walk and play
- Have skateboarding close to middle school
- Soccer could be played in open areas
- Simple and fun summer day camp
- Tennis in one park
- Volleyball in one park

- Any tunnels [culverts?] now under streets for crossing busy roads that could be used for walking/biking?
- Love the natural areas with trails that aren't cement (small gravel, bark, or wood chips) – possibly a not too wide asphalt bike trail for some areas, or side-by-side
- Why do parks close at 11 pm? I thought this was a free country.
- Small tents for camping can be so great!
- Isn't vandalism usually the result of feeling oppressed and not taken care of?
- Maybe donation boxes could be set up for tent campers
- Be good to have one or two parks with showers
- Hydrants or drinking fountains good
- Things don't have to be fancy and expensive – just good and simple
- The trimming and clearing of Arbor Lake has opened area for seeing lake and for air to move, but would surely be good to save the wonderful black raspberry and gooseberries and some mulberry – good for birds and people
- Blackberries with thorns are kind of mean to work with
- Save some part-dead trees in timber for owls and wood-birds to nest in
- Keep natural areas as big and as undisturbed as possible
- Swim pool by high school is a good size; maybe a slide could be added
- Maybe some shade trees west of pool about 30-40 feet for some hot afternoon shade – possible Shademaster thornless locust; something like that wouldn't make shade too dense for pool
- Play some Bob Dylan!
- Maybe small signs at parks: "Pet owners – thanks for cleaning up after your pet," "Please be careful to not leave fish line or hooks – birds, animals or people may be hurt with it."
- Could drinking fountain at east side of big shelter at Miller Park be fixed?
- Drinking fountain on east side by Arbor Lake trail is so good! It may need new seal or washer at turn handle; water keeps running at top end spout where drink.
- Maybe a modest size shelter could be put close to trail and shade and drinking fountain around Arbor Lake. Don't have to be fancy or expensive. Possibly a partial windbreak to west-northwest part of shelter. Maybe a modest shelter on west side of lake, too, close to the wood bridge and spillway.
- I liked most of the concepts developed for Central Park in the charette during the Walter Burley Griffin meeting. Especially redesign of paths, children's play areas, area for farmers' market, improvements to Vets' Building and THE FOUNTAIN! (I guess that's the whole plan!)
- More bike racks throughout Grinnell will help with (ped) traffic on sidewalks.
- A dog park would add a lot to community.
- I don't know how to fix this but I do think Thursday is too close to Saturday for Farmers Market. Not everyone gets the paper, there should be posters or some other way to keep the community informed. I have sports posters in my window and people are always stopping and looking at them.
- Parks & Rec should try new forums. An outdoor volleyball tournament – divide by age group and get old and young involved.
- Outdoor recreation for children is great, what about "old farts" – 45-60 years, kids are gone and they have time on their hands.
- I think the parks are great. On a related note, I do think the parks & rec class offerings for children should have more offerings for children of working parents (evening and weekend classes). As working parents, there were very few offerings that my child could take part in (even though he had the desire). Thanks for working on this issue (of parks in general)!
- We need safe ways to bike or skate between the parks and schools.
- We need a decent, contemporary water park.
- We need a skate park
- We need to pay more to get more
- My children love going to the parks. I appreciate the city's upkeep of these areas.
- More bike trails would be appreciated. I fear someone getting hit when riding on the roads.
- I think the parks are great, but our swimming pool certainly needs fixed.
- Also, our bike trails need to be in city.
- An immediate improvement would be umbrellas at the pool. the sun exposure there is merciless.
- Recreation for winter would be wonderful – skating and cross-country skiing

- Great to be doing this planning!
- Too many people drive when they could walk or bike in town. Needs to be more trails/sidewalks throughout city – lots of areas do not have sidewalks. Need programs to encourage pedestrian activity.
- When maintaining Arbor Lake Park, keep in mind that migrating birds like the shrubby plants close to the water; they get shelter, water, and food. the local Audubon group has enjoyed good birding there in the past. If you clear out all of the shoreline bushes, it will likely encourage the geese – not a good thing (geese like visibility).
- Fix the gopher hole with Bill Menner's foot in it. Grinnell does a GREAT job with the resources it has!!!
- Thanks for taking the initiative to start this assessment project and hopefully improvement of the park system.
- Emphasis needs to be on encouraging ACTIVITY (fitness) in the community.
- Thank you for the parks and keep up the good work.
- Expand access to bike trails, on and off road.
- Community would appreciate a well designed disc golf course.
- A disc golf course would be awesome.
- Think broader than a patch of grass and some play equipment. These spaces need to be social centers.
- Concessions, phone booths, and improved restrooms.
- Improved and more drinking fountains.
- Skating.
- Too much listed already!
- The majority of these activities and are furnished by private sector.
- The City, with current direction should concentrate on improving the current park system – bring them up to par!; i.e. maintenance, maintenance, maintenance.
- Build water feature park
- Close the small, non-functional system parks
- Grinnell has plenty of parks, we just need to improve on what we now have.
- There needs to be more money set aside each year to keep the parks in good shape.
- Don't duplicate that which is available from non-city sources.
- Would like to see more opportunities in our parks to learn about natural ecosystems.
- A better emphasis on four-season interest
- Larger, more coordinated planting schemes in at least some parks. Memorial park?
- Trail expansion
- Environmental education maybe through volunteers
- Not sure about boating
- Trail loops beyond parks
- Not sure about aerobics/fitness/exercise
- Not sure about crafts/hobbies
- Not sure we should be doing summer day camps; parks should be available for summer day camp use by other organizations
- I would like to see the city made more bike friendly with a bike trail loop that would draw others into our community and make it easier for people to use bikes to get to and from school, work, and home, as well as outdoor recreation.
- We should have bike trails follow water wherever possible.
- Grinnell's parks need to be maintained! After that, developing current spaces should take priority over considering acquisitions.
- Environmental and hunting education: allow interest groups to sponsor kiosks, hikes, demonstrations
- Outdoor recreation instruction: for sponsored events such as soccer, baseball
- Swimming: pool only; too much liability in lakes
- Art in parks: interest groups can sponsor kiosks, events, demonstrations
- Aerobic/fitness/exercise a Rec Dept. responsibility
- Family recreations programs a Rec Dept. responsibility
- School programs: allow schools free use anytime, but not City-sponsored

- Summer Day Camp: free use anytime but not City-sponsored
- Tennis is available at high school and college
- Really interested in pursuing variety in the parks with excellence in recreational opportunity
- A lot of the above activities/services would be great but I'm not sure the City Parks Dept. would need to handle it. A lot of activities are already covered by Ahrens Park or others. I see no reason to waste the City's money duplicating something already available.
- I like the survey
- Should the City make parks available to other providers for activities/services, or should the City provide?
- May need a new park in SE development
- Older child activities
- Trails
- Skateboarding
- Improved pool
- Paths within parks
- How will City allocate resources across all parks?
- More lighting
- Environmental education is a school function
- Camping for special events only
- Hunting education duplicates others
- Natural resource protection and enhancement is a school function
- Outdoor recreation instruction on limited topics
- Aerobic/fitness/exercise could take place along trails
- Limit baseball to Ahrens
- Limit soccer to Ahrens
- Tennis: cooperate with school
- I like the idea of citizen managers for various parks. they will pay attention to the little things – they can report to the Park Board.
- Give kids stickers when they play in each park – kind of like stickers on a suitcase.
- Playground and other improvement to Van Horne Park
- Jaycees Park needs serious attention
- Consider a dog park
- Project facilities to a wide age range